



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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24 OCTOBER 1966

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1. South Vietnam

The Buddhist congress that met last Thursday and broke up in confusion on Saturday has now produced a formal split in the Buddhist movement.

The militant faction reconvened and elected their own chairman of the Buddhist Institute on Sunday. Since Tam Chau maintains that he is still chairman, this leaves two chairmen, each with his own supporters and headquarters.

These developments make any reconciliation between moderates and militants much more difficult and further weaken the Buddhists as a political force. They will, however, add to other political problems: most moderates are northerners sympathetic to Ky, while the militants tend to sympathize with the opposition southerners in the cabinet and constituent assembly.

2. North Vietnam

[redacted] who recently spent nearly three months in Hanoi found morale and discipline generally good and essential services functioning.

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The populace was busily--and apparently willingly--working in support of the war effort and the economy. Much work was being done by families. For example, petroleum containers were being manufactured in back yards all over Hanoi. These were collected daily and used for dispersed storage.

Although rice was rationed, food was sufficient and the transportation and electric power systems were adequate. Streets and roads were kept in good repair. The authorities were still trying to move people out of the city but they tended to drift back at night and on weekends.

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3. Soviet Union

The United States Intelligence Board has just completed work on the annual National Intelligence Estimate, "Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Attack." The Director of Central Intelligence has summarized its findings at Annex.

4. Poland

A journalist source has told the Warsaw embassy that President Johnson's speech of 7 October made such an impact on Gomulka and company that the word was passed to the Polish press to stop attacking the President. We think there may be some exaggeration here, but note that this report is generally in line with other high-level reaction out of Warsaw.

5. Brazil

Ambassador Tuthill believes that the government may cancel the congressional elections set for next month if the opposition mounts a particularly hard-hitting campaign against Castello Branco's "dictatorial" policies.

As for president-elect Costa e Silva, he has up to now expressed strong support for the president, but the ambassador believes that many of his supporters are far from pleased with Castello Branco's dissolution of congress and his efforts to stifle the opposition. Some of them even fear that the government's action could result in an opposition victory.

6. Panama

An antigovernment and anti-US student demonstration in the Canal Zone on 20 October is quite likely to be followed by more incidents next week when Panama celebrates a national holiday. The National Guard is already alerted and Canal Zone authorities are reviewing border control measures.

ANNEXDCI Summary of NIE 11-8-66

In my judgment the conclusions of NIE 11-8-66, on "Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Attack," can be summarized as follows:

The Soviets are building powerful strategic attack forces along with the strategic defense and other elements of their military establishment. Their main object in building these forces is to deter the US and support their own foreign policy.

Over the past year, the Soviets have started to build ICBM launchers in larger numbers than ever before. By 1968, they will have a considerably bigger operational force than we anticipated in our estimate of a year ago. Most of the ICBM's will be in dispersed silos to protect them from attack. This force should give the Soviet leaders greater confidence in their deterrent because of its ability to inflict mass destruction upon the US even if the US were to strike first.

In their planning for the years beyond 1968, the Soviets must consider such things as the cost of building more ICBM launchers, their technical ability to develop better systems, and the possible course of US military programs. They may decide that there is little strategic advantage in building an ICBM force much larger than the one they will have in 1968. On the other hand, they may seek to strengthen their deterrent and military power still more by increasing their ICBM force to about the size of the one now planned by the US. In either case, they will probably introduce new ICBM's with greater ability to survive US attack and greater effectiveness to strike at US forces. But the Soviet leaders almost certainly do not expect to build forces so powerful that they could launch a first strike against the US without receiving unacceptable damage in return.

The Soviet strategic attack forces will continue to include numerous missile submarines. In about 1968, the fleet will probably begin to have

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ANNEX (Cont'd)

improved submarines with longer range missiles, more like US Polaris submarines than are present Soviet types. Missile submarines will increase their patrolling in the open seas, and in a few years a number of them may be on station within missile range of the US. The USSR will keep large numbers of bombers and missiles which could deliver massive attacks against Europe and Asia. It will continue to have a small force of bombers to use against the US.

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, US Air Force, does not agree with certain major views expressed in the estimate. He estimates that "programs already underway, plus a continuing strong research and development effort, reflect a Soviet determination to rise from a position of strategic inferiority to one of at least numerical parity with the US in the belief that such a position would markedly enhance the aggressive pursuit of Communist aims." He considers that the Soviets will build somewhat more ICBM launchers than forecast in the estimate and that the estimate underplays the role of bombardment aviation in Soviet intercontinental attack capabilities.

Official copies of this National Intelligence Estimate will be distributed on 27 October. This estimate will be followed within the next few weeks by estimates setting forth our latest findings on Soviet strategic defenses and Soviet general purpose military forces.

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